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TERRORISM IN ALGERIA: ITS EFFECT ON THE
COUNTRY'S POLITICAL SCENARIO, ON RE-
GIONAL STABILITY, AND ON GLOBAL SECURITY

Y 4. IN 8/16:AL 3

Terrorism in Algeria: Its Effect on...

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

OCTOBER 11, 1995

Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



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TERRORISM IN ALGERIA: ITS EFFECT ON THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL SCENARIO, ON REGIONAL STABILITY, AND ON GLOBAL SECURITY

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1995

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (chair of the subcommittee) presiding.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Good morning, the subcommittee will now come to order.

Terrorism: "The use of force or threat to demoralize, intimate, and subjugate specifically such use as a political weapon." This is Webster's definition and it focuses the subject matter that we will be discussing today; however, it does not accurately reflect the complex nature of the problem.

Terrorism and militancy in Algeria is the product, as we will soon hear it described by one of our witnesses, of a tortured history and incompatible ideas imploding into domestic turmoil and exploding into international terrorism. It is the offspring of decades of moral conflict between religious beliefs and political ideals; between the forces of tradition and change, as centuries-old dictums and rules of conduct are challenged by the ideas of a modern, diverse, and pluralistic world.

When Algeria gained its independence from France in 1962, it appeared to have the most assets of all the countries in the region to achieve a successful transition to a system of government which reflected democratic ideals. Nevertheless, analysts say that after decades of mismanagement, Algeria became a shadow of its once promising self with food shortages, overcrowded neighborhoods, and unemployment becoming the lead indicators of its future.

In October 1988, this all came to a boiling point when hundreds, if not thousands, of young people in Algeria took their grievances to the streets. This would mark the beginning of a new era in Algeria.

The FLN Government heeded the call and responded by launching an effort to permit political reform. Moderate organizations interpreted the call as an obligation to reform their society and political system to conform to certain values, focusing their efforts in the

reform of personal behavior and domestic socio-economic scenario. All noble endeavors.

However, the reality is that some distorted the message of this call to foment radical reactionary elements in Algeria who define their role as a campaign to rid Algerian society and the world of unbelievers or infidels.

The 1992 coup further galvanized those militant forces. While several parties more moderate than the FIS did emerge, it was countered by the creation and growth of more violent and ruthless groups.

These terrorists assassinate feminists, journalists, and secular intellectuals in the streets, with the number of deaths to date totaling over 40,000. The militant armies have also launched a campaign against foreigners which has forced members to close consulates and several have been forced to evacuate their nationals.

Furthermore, some Western oil companies have repatriated families and many employees as a precaution. Analysts say that this would harm the oil and gas industry, which in turn would only aggravate Algeria's economic woes, which are credited to be the root cause, the initial source, of much of Algeria's turmoil.

And in the midst of this chaos, with violence and terror ingrained in the psyche of all Algerians, Presidential elections have been scheduled for this November. Already, some have issued threats against the people of Algeria, vowing to attack election centers and kill anyone who goes to the polls.

How can basic human principles and democratic ideas flourish in such an environment? How can a country prosper if its citizens fear for their lives?

But let us look beyond domestic instability. The crisis in Algeria has grave consequences beyond its borders with the potential to destabilize neighboring countries.

Morocco has thus far escaped serious dissent from radical elements but it is said to be extremely concerned about instability which may spill over from Algeria. Tunisia and Egypt are both being plagued by violence from Algerian militant groups which are reported to be receiving support from the governments of Iran and Sudan.

U.S. allies in Western Europe—primarily France, Spain and Italy—are particularly concerned about immigration of extremists and militants from North Africa into their countries and the potential for terrorist acts against their citizens. Experts at the French Defense Ministry's top secret Office of Islamic Analysis concluded in a report shared by France with Jordan, Egypt and Israel that: "Islamic terrorism is becoming an international affair aimed at destabilizing Arab oil-producing countries, traditional monarchies, and moderate pluralistic republics."

The terror plaguing Algeria is regarded by intelligence services throughout the world as merely the first phase of the "intifida", or uprising, believed to encompass half a dozen countries. Hit squads are now operating with the full blessing of some underground authorities which have accepted this decree, legalizing the death by assassination of all those who oppose their extremist interpretation of certain laws, and who favor secular systems of government.

Intelligence agencies have also discovered a proliferation of various cultural and charitable organizations which frequently did serve as fronts for terrorist cells and arms-smuggling centers throughout the world.

It is clear that the threat is real. It is deadly. It is imminent. And it is our own backyard. It is a human rights issue. It is a political issue. It is a security issue.

But how can the United States and our allies help control this phenomenon? What is being done diplomatically, economically, militarily to keep this form of terrorism from reversing the progress made toward stabilization and democratic reform movements, and toward peaceful coexistence in a new world order? What is being done to protect U.S. citizens from becoming victims of terrorist acts by these militants? What lessons can we get from Algeria's past which would provide insights into the current situation?

These and other pertinent issues to any discussion on Algeria will be addressed by our witnesses today. Before I introduce our first speaker, I would like to point out that due to the highly classified nature of counter-terrorism efforts conducted by the FBI, we will be having a separate closed briefing with them and other agencies at a later date.

And now, let me proceed with the introduction of our witnesses for the first panel.

Initiating the discussion is Mr. David Welch, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. He is a career foreign service officer having served in the Middle East and South Asia. Most recently, he served as the Deputy Chief of Mission in various U.S. embassies, and a member of the National Security Council staff at the White House.

He will then be followed by Mr. Bruce Riedel, who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs for International Security Affairs. Prior to assuming this position, he served as the National Intelligence Officer for Near East and South Asia for the Director of Central Intelligence, as well as serving for over 2 years as Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at NSC.

A career intelligence analyst, Mr. Riedel joined the CIA in 1977, where he served in numerous capacities including Deputy Chief, Persian Gulf Task Force during the 1990-1991 Iraq-Kuwait crisis. He was awarded the Intelligence Medal of Merit for his contributions to CIA analysis during this assignment.

We welcome both of you today, and we look forward to your testimony. Thank you.

Mr. Welch.

STATEMENT OF C. DAVID WELCH, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MR. WELCH. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. I have some brief remarks to make, and will submit my written statement for the record. Let me say that we welcome your continuing interest in Algeria and the region, and the opportunity to participate in these hearings this morning.

When you do hold your closed session on the specifics of terrorism, we would like to participate.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. WELCH. If I may then just read a few brief remarks.

The United States has important national interests in the outcome of the present struggle within Algeria. We want to see a stable, friendly, and prosperous Algeria at peace with itself. U.S. policy responds to this crisis on several fronts—by condemning terrorism, supporting economic reforms, and calling for a broadening of the political process. Neither the emergence of a fanatical regime in Algeria nor the descent of this important state into chaos are in the interest of the United States.

As you point out, the Algerian crisis also has a regional dynamic which has repercussions for important U.S. allies. Beyond the far-reaching consequences for Algeria itself, gains by the most radical Islamists could embolden extremists in neighboring North African states such as Tunisia or Morocco—key U.S. allies in the region. The Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA)—throughout my testimony I will be using this acronym—has claimed responsibility for terrorist bombing incidents in France. Ultimately, Algeria's crisis could provoke an influx of refugees into France and elsewhere in Western Europe.

U.S. policy in Algeria seeks to end this cycle of violence which has accelerated in the aftermath of the canceled elections of 1992. Algeria's current crisis is rooted in frustrations arising from political exclusion, economic misery, and social injustice—conditions that have facilitated the growth of an armed Islamist insurgency. Purely military means will not resolve this crisis. We believe a political solution involving dialog between the regime and other elements of Algerian society prepared to eschew violence is the only viable alternative for the people of Algeria. We have conveyed this message both to elements of the opposition and to the highest levels of the Algerian Government.

The U.S. endorses the government of Algeria's efforts to transform its state-controlled economy into a market economy. The United States supports the economic reform program which the Algerian Government is implementing in coordination with the IMF. We joined with other creditors in rescheduling Algeria's public debt through the Paris Club. We are also working to protect the equities of U.S. private investment in Algeria, much of which is underwritten by our government.

Several hundred Americans, as you mentioned, work in Algeria's oil and gas sector and in the construction of an important gas pipeline to Spain. However, we continue to advise the Algerian Government that economic recovery depends upon political reform.

Algerian society as a whole is paying a high price for this brutal internal conflict. Violence has risen steadily since the Algerian regime suspended the electoral process in 1992 and outlawed the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). In the early phase of the conflict, extremists on both sides believed violence could solve their problem. Both have been proved wrong.

Nearly 4 years into the conflict, the regime shows no sign it can end the violent opposition through security measures alone. The armed Islamists are far from winning but show every sign they can

continue to fight. Since 1992, we have estimated that about 40,000 Algerians have died in the conflict between security forces of the regime and the Islamist insurgents. Many have been civilians.

Violations of human rights have taken place on both sides, helping to fuel acts of extreme violence within the armed conflict. Already in 1995, extremists of the GIA have killed 23 journalists, 16 foreigners, and numerous women and children in an effort to bring notoriety—through terrorism—to their cause.

Despite international calls for a broadening of the political process, including by France and other important EU allies, the government of Algeria has rejected consideration of a National Platform put forward by all major opposition parties which met in Rome under the auspices of the St. Egidio society, a lay Catholic organization. These parties together garnered 80 percent of the votes cast in Algeria's December 1991 elections.

While the United States has not advocated a specific solution to the crisis in Algeria, we have stated that, given the degree of popular support represented by the political parties who were at Rome, it could serve as a basis for the discussion of a process by which Algeria's crisis could be brought to a peaceful conclusion and a process of national reconciliation launched.

The Algerian Government has announced plans to hold Presidential elections in just a few weeks, November 16, 1995. Four candidates have qualified to participate in this election; however, none of them hails from Algeria's main opposition parties. The two main non-Islamist political parties, the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and the National Liberation Front (FLN), have decided not to field candidates in the election on the grounds that these elections lack credibility. The FIS remains illegal and barred from political activity.

The Algerian people will need to judge the credibility and fairness of the forthcoming elections. Will they accept that the election marks a real departure from the old styles of government repudiated by Algerians across the political spectrum? Will they vote in significant numbers? Will they accept that the results are honest?

Only if such conditions are met can the Presidential elections help move Algeria toward national reconciliation and peace. The security environment in which the planned election will take place is difficult. One Presidential candidate has already been assassinated. The GIA has adopted the banner "one vote, one bullet," and vowed to kill voters and election observers. The United States is firmly opposed to those who seek to impose their will on others by violent means.

Thank you for inviting me here today, and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Welch appears in the appendix.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Riedel.

STATEMENT OF BRUCE RIEDEL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEAR EAST ASIA AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Mr. RIEDEL. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I would like to begin by commending you for holding this hearing today on a subject

which we believe is of increasing importance to U.S. national security interests. I hope I can add to your understanding of the impact of civil conflict in Algeria on the regional states and on U.S. interests in the region.

U.S. national interests in the Mediterranean dictate that the Department of Defense pay particularly close attention to the evolving security situation in Algeria. The Department of Defense has serious concerns about the turmoil in Algeria. A power vacuum in North Africa or a hostile government coming to power in Algeria carries very dangerous ramifications for which the United States must be prepared.

Sea and air transit routes through North Africa facilitate our military operations throughout the Middle East region. The United States depends on sea lines of communications from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Suez Canal to allow the rapid deployment for naval forces from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. We need friendly nations in North Africa to support these operations or at least not to impede them.

Likewise, air operations during initial deployments to the region and in support operations during a conflict depend on overflight and basing rights in North Africa.

Beyond operational requirements is the strategic interest in providing a stable Mediterranean on NATO's southern flank. Algeria itself has a significant military capability with Kilo submarines and SU-24 fighter bombers and it has the largest military in North Africa after Egypt.

If the Algeria situation deteriorates to full-scale civil war or Algeria becomes a hostile Islamic revolutionary state, these forces could rapidly complicate U.S. military operations worldwide. Simultaneously, the chaos could rapidly spill over into neighboring states destabilizing North Africa and possibly southern Europe.

Vulnerable neighbors like Tunisia and Morocco are success stories which contribute to the stability of North Africa. Both nations have made significant contributions to the Middle East peace process. Any breakdown of the integrity of the economic and political development of these two countries would have serious consequences on U.S. strategic interests throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

Preparations to protect U.S. citizens abroad are a high priority for the department. Algeria has the highest evacuation priority for the U.S. European Command, which maintains continuous contact with Embassy Algiers and coordinates planning for the evacuation of non-combatants there with several NATO allies. These discussions, however, are limited to resolving conflicts in our respective evacuation plans and are not combining planning sessions.

We share the concerns of our southern European allies that political turmoil in Algeria could escalate into a full-scale civil war, and that Islamic extremism could spread to other North African countries. We realize, however, that Islamic militancy is not a coherent or unified international political movement. It is but one of several responses to the perceived inadequacies of existing governments, and this anti-government sentiment is often very nationalistic in character.

Algeria, for example, is a state at risk for attack by a radical Islamist insurgency. As you already noted, the government, which in this case in essence is the military, created many of the conditions which precipitated the violent opposition.

Inadequate attempts at economic development and persistent efforts to maintain political control from a narrow political base alienated the population. Frequent violations of human rights and denial of civil liberties further eroded popular support.

Finally, the government's decision to seek a military solution rather than seek a broader-based political solution guaranteed a violent and persistent opposition. Ultimately, government actions marginalized moderate elements of society and empowered Islamic radicals who enthusiastically took up the fight.

Containing this radical Islamic insurgency in Algeria requires stability in surrounding countries. In effect, we must enhance the security of surrounding countries and simultaneously encourage their economic and political development. Tunisia and Morocco are long-time allies. We engage both in regular joint military exercises to demonstrate our support and enhance our joint operating capabilities.

Tunisia's exercise program is by far the most robust. Eleven exercises a year employ naval, air, special warfare, and amphibious forces from both countries. Morocco's smaller program exercises air, naval and ground forces at least once a year. We have provided both countries with a modest International Military Education and Training, or IMET, program. We regularly provide excess defense articles to both, but neither country currently receives Foreign Military Financing or Economic Support Fund allocations.

Furthermore, the United States works bilaterally and in concert with NATO to maintain a dialog with five North African and Middle Eastern countries—Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania. It is important to deepen contacts with the stable and responsible countries of the Middle East and North Africa. The goal of such efforts are to enhance the security of nations around the Mediterranean and to improve their relations with each other.

The Department of Defense has never had close or extensive ties with the Algerian military. The Department of Defense has a limited direct role in Algeria. It is a rule that has been peripheral to Algerian politics since the early days of the Algerian Republic simply because of the strong military relationship Algeria chose to develop with the former Soviet Union. That strong military relationship did not encourage the attitudes and communications channels required to develop good, close and mutually beneficial military to military relations with the United States.

The United States still finances military training in the United States for about 10 Algerian military studies a year in an effort to promote military professionalism and respect the democratic values and human rights. Beyond that, we have sold minimal quantities of non-lethal defense articles on a cash basis. As the civil conflict has escalated in Algeria in the last few years, the Department of Defense has reduced its already modest contacts with the Algerian military, but has tried to keep channels of communications open in an attempt to discourage abuses.

Madam Chairman, stability in North Africa is crucial to U.S. interests. Stability is crucial to the economic and political development that stifles extremism. Algeria's neighbors will continue to be the focus of the Department of Defense efforts in the near term. These efforts are critical to the maintenance of stability in the Mediterranean and North Africa.

Again, let me close by commending you for holding this hearing today to look at this important issue.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Riedel appears in the appendix.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

We have been joined by Mr. Chabot of our subcommittee, and I thank him very much for being here.

Mr. Welch, I would like to ask you a few questions, and then I will go on to Mr. Riedel.

How do the other nations in the Arab world see this crisis in Algeria, and what sort of impact does it have on American encouragement, whether it is human rights, or the democratic process, or other liberalization measures?

Can you tell us the impact that that would have in that region?

Mr. WELCH. I think it is safe to say that every Arab nation is watching the phenomenon in Algeria extremely closely, and is watching our response to it. If I can generalize a little bit about that Arab reaction.

Most of the area is quite concerned with Islamic politics, and the reactions to that vary from country to country, depending on their own circumstances.

It is hard to generalize about each nation's treatment of that phenomenon. Each has its own circumstances. It is safe to say, however, that in the case of Algeria, where the problems in the country spill over into violence on the scale that is happening now, this is regarded by most of our Arab friends with great abhorrence. They have a similar view to our own regarding the political process there and encourage national reconciliation. But, frankly, in most cases they are equally frustrated by their inability to effect the situation.

Of course, the countries closest to Algeria have the most intense interest, and there are friends among those. And they watch the developments there extremely closely. In terms of our own posture on Algeria, the kind of modulated policy that we have carved out and that I have described in my statement at the opening, I think, has received support throughout the Arab world.

There are, of course, varying responses to the most extreme kind of violence that has occurred in Algeria, and governments tend to have their own way of dealing with those things. That, again, depends on the circumstances. In your opening remarks you mentioned the policies in Tunisia and Egypt. Those governments are dealing with their own problems of Islamic politics, including the case of Egypt where they have a different set of responses to violence.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. And you had mentioned Europe in your response. What are the views and the policies of these European countries, especially France, Spain and Italy, which are the most affected by the situation in Algeria? What has been their response?

Mr. WELCH. They are the most affected, and their interests, of course, as proximate neighbors, are more deeply engaged than our own. The response there has been similar to our own, even in the case of France in the recent months. Their public statements have called for a dialog based upon a return to the process in Rome under the auspices of St. Egidio. The European allies joined with us in the statement of the G-7 which promoted a similar process to try to find a solution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Now, someone said that there are no moderates on either side of, or many sides of this problem. The State Department believes that there are moderates. If you can tell us what the position of those moderates are, what kind of influence or power do they possess, and what can we really do realistically, to change the dynamics of that explosive situation.

Mr. WELCH. Well, we take the view that you cannot describe everybody in Algeria as being of exactly the same political persuasion, whether they are on the side of the military regime, or on the side of its opposition. There is a range of opinion.

Unfortunately, with the decay that has occurred since 1992, it is the extremists that tended to emerge as the most prominent. There is, however, a substantial, what you might call moderate, element to the opposition as represented by those parties that got together in Rome under the auspices of St. Egidio, and came forward with the platform which expressed that moderate consensus.

We do not endorse that platform specifically, but we think it serves as a useful signal of the kind of dialog and process that could be promoted if there is a will to do so on both sides.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. Riedel, if the extremist groups would gain power in Algeria, what sort of military threat would they pose to U.S. interests in the region, and what specific mechanisms would they implement?

Mr. RIEDEL. Much, of course, would depend upon the specifics of the nature from the hostile regime. But in a worst case scenario where we have a regime emerge in Algeria that might be roughly comparable to the hostile regime in Iran, one area we would have to worry about would be support for terrorism in other countries, and on a global basis. Another would be support for subversion in neighboring countries like Tunisia and Morocco, further afield being Egypt, and also in the sub-Sahara in Africa.

In strictly military terms, the Algerian military, as I noted in my opening remarks, is the second largest in North Africa. It does have some power projection capability, including Kilo submarines and SU-24 advance fighter bombers purchased from the former Soviet Union. If it chose, it could use those systems in order to disrupt air and naval movements through the Mediterranean, and potentially cause risks for U.S. operations in those areas.

Again, let me stress I think this is definitely looking at the worst case scenario, but it is one that we have to think about and take some prudent planning measures for.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. We have read reports in recent years about teenage girls' throats being slashed for refusing to wear a veil, and journalists and intellectuals being singled out for execution. Anyone, including religious leaders, would become targets for extremist death squads if they do not support a certain position.

How realistic is it to believe that a political solution such as the one that you were talking about in your statement could be possible in Algeria where people go around slashing throats of children? Would they really become part of a broad-based political solution?

Mr. RIEDEL. I think I might ask David to take a stab at that question as well. But our judgment on the situation there is that neither side seems to have achieved a decisive military advantage on the battlefield.

You are quite right that terrorism is frequently seen. There have been horrific acts of human rights abuses. There are charges on both sides about the other's abuse of its authorities.

Because neither side has achieved a decisive military advantage, we think that sooner or later there is some possibility yet that they will seek to find a political resolution to their problems. Conceivably this would involve some kind of power sharing arrangement.

I would be the first to admit, Madam Chairman, that that does not look to be imminent on the horizon right now. And our expectation is that we will probably see several more rounds of increasing violence before it becomes more realistic.

Let me ask Mr. Welch if he wants to add to that.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Mr. WELCH. The extremists in Algeria have become increasingly effective in the recent months as shown in the Paris attacks. There have been examples of horrific violence of the sort you described. Let me just note a couple statistics that substantiate, in particular, the growing use of terrorism by the armed Islamic Group.

In August, as you know, they attacked the airport. They attacked, I believe, the French Embassy in Algiers, killing a number of French employees. They hijacked an aircraft, an Air France airplane in December 1994, killing three passengers before the terrorists themselves were overwhelmed by the French security people.

In January 1995, the Armed Islamic Group claimed responsibility for a massive car bomb at police headquarters in Algeria, killing scores of people.

There have been incidents of terrorist violence against high-profile targets, Presidential candidates, journalists, women and children. These acts, I think, are likely to persist given the climate that exists there now.

By denouncing these acts, Madam Chairman, I do not mean to exculpate the regime of any abuses itself. As we pointed out in our human rights report, this is a very tough group of people that hold power in Algeria, and they themselves also are guilty of some of these.

In this environment, your question is an excellent one: how do you get from here to where it is we would like to be, to see a process of political reconciliation underway?

Well, you take advantage of opportunities. One opportunity was represented, as I mentioned, with the statement that came out of Rome. Unfortunately, the government in Algeria did not take up that possibility, and use that as a basis for dialog even if they disagreed with it.

Another opportunity which is viewed differently, of course, by the opposition is the elections. To the extent that these are honest,

credible, genuine, and enjoy broad participation, that may be another opportunity to contribute toward the process of reconciliation.

I have to say right now that the jury is definitely out on that.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much.

Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I appreciate your mentioning that I was here, and I apologize for being a little late.

Mr. Welch, just a couple questions.

What is the role that nearby Libya is playing, if any, in stirring up terrorism that we are witnessing in Algeria today?

[Pause.]

Mr. WELCH. I was just checking with somebody who accompanied me from our Terrorism Office.

Mr. CHABOT. Yes.

Mr. WELCH. Realizing that you had addressed some of these questions in closed session as well, I think my conclusion is that most of the resources and most of the intentions are home-grown in Algeria.

Mr. CHABOT. Also, Algerian terrorism is the subject of the topic here today, but another question to you, if I could. It is yet to produce a trial here in the United Kingdom of two indicted terrorists from the Pan Am 103 attack. They are still residing in Libya.

What is the Administration doing to keep the pressure on Libya to produce these two defendants who have been indicted in an important case of international terrorism?

Mr. WELCH. As you know, there are various international sanctions that obtain vis-a-vis Libya, and we have our own as well. Those continue. We are always looking at ways to improve them and to make Libya's life more difficult. The second element of our policy is, of course, we are not going to waver and take up any of the many Libyan offers for compromise on this issue. Our own suggestion is to turn them over for trial here or in the United Kingdom. We think we have superb international support for that position.

I think Libya will, if it has not already, figure that out and it is going to suffer another significant embarrassment when it loses its chance to get a Security Council seat in the next go around. They will see the international community against them because of diplomacy between us and our French and British partners, and by the credibility that our position enjoys internationally.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you.

And the next question, my final question, and if you have already dealt with this in your statement, I apologize for asking it. But in my mind I would still like to know your feelings on this.

If the election in Algeria had been allowed to stand, what type of country would we likely have seen in Algeria today?

Mr. WELCH. That is a tough question to answer, sir. I am not sure, to be honest. But it is a pretty safe conclusion that in the intervening period since early 1992 conditions have deteriorated significantly. Whether that could have been averted by a different outcome in 1992, I do not honestly know. I would like to think it could have been.

Mr. CHABOT. Would we likely have seen the government and policies similar to what we see in Iran, for example?

Mr. WELCH. I think had that government been formed by the most extreme components of the Islamic element in Algeria, or had somehow been taken over later by those elements, that is a conceivable outcome, yes. But I do not think it automatically the outcome.

Mr. CHABOT. And if that can happen, I assume that that clearly would not be in the best interest of the United States?

Mr. WELCH. Absolutely not. As I said earlier, and as Bruce also mentioned, that sort of outcome in the region would be destabilizing to the region and to our interests there.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much to both panelists. We appreciate your being here today. Thank you.

I would like to now introduce our second set of panelists, and while they are getting situated I will proceed with the introductions.

Our first witness for this portion of the hearing is Dr. Yonah Alexander. Dr. Alexander is the Director of the Terrorism Studies Program and the Group Rights Studies Program, as well as visiting Research Professor of Law at The George Washington University. He is also a Senior Fellow for the Low-Intensity Conflict and Terrorism programs at the U.S. Global Strategy Council.

He has taught and served in various research positions at universities throughout the United States and abroad. Dr. Alexander is founder and Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal on Group Rights, and also founded and edited Terrorism: An International Journal. In addition, he is the General Editor of Terrorism: An International Resource File, published by University Microfilms International.

We will then hear from Mr. Roger Kaplan, the Editor of Freedom Review, and Director of Publications for Freedom House. Freedom Review is a bi-monthly journal of politics, culture, human rights, and international affairs published by Freedom House and Transaction Press of Rutgers University. He has authored numerous articles on these issues and most recently has been focusing some of his efforts on the issues that we are addressing here today.

I thank you both for being here and sharing with us your thoughts on this critical issue.

Dr. Alexander, we will begin with you.

STATEMENT OF YONAH ALEXANDER, DIRECTOR, TERRORISM STUDIES PROGRAM, GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Dr. ALEXANDER. Thank you very much for your kind invitation. I would like to inform you that I will basically summarize my statement, and there are some further materials and some additional documentation that I can present.

I am convinced that the international community has failed to appreciate the nature, scope and intensity of the terrorist threat, and therefore has not developed a commitment needed to deal with the challenge effectively.

Nowhere is this reality more apparent than in the Algerian case which is experiencing one of the most severe terrorist problems confront contemporary society.

At George Washington University, we had a seminar on May 15 this year, of this problem, and we had a number of ambassadors from North Africa discuss this issue. A summary of this seminar will be provided to the subcommittee in the near future.

Today, I would like to present an overview of some of the conceptual and strategic aspects of Islamic terrorism; and deal with some of the responses, and offer some preliminary recommendations.

Again, the major reason for the failure of the international community to understand the nature of the Algerian experience is the lack of consensus concerning what constitutes Islamic terrorism, Algerian terrorism. In fact, as already stated this morning, when a situation in Algeria was described as an insurgency, I would like to submit to you that when everybody discusses terrorism, we are dealing with unlawful acts, illegal acts intended to create overwhelming fear in a target population larger than the civilian or military victims attacked or threatened.

In other words, we are not dealing with insurgency because whenever we discuss insurgency it seems to me we are dealing with an armed revolt that follows the rules of international armed conflict.

In the Algerian case, I would like to submit that those groups that resort to terrorist methods are not insurgents. Rather, I think they should be regarded as outlaws, as criminals, no matter how "noble" their objective might be. If we look at the case—if we look at the armed Islamic group, if we look at the Islamic Salvation Army, those who attack and wage a campaign of terrorism against the Algerian Government and secular persons and institutions, it seems to me that by any definition they should be regarded not as fighters or freedom fighters and insurgents, but as terrorists.

Second, I think there is a misconception regarding the exact nature and implication of so-called Islamic terrorism. The problem is not confined solely to Algeria. It is rapidly becoming one of the most serious challenges to regional and global stability.

But I want to stress that the threat does not come from traditional or even fundamentalist Islam, which is dedicated to the search for social and political organization on the basis of Islamic values. The true threat to the so-called New Middle East and the New World Order comes from radical movements that use terrorism to achieve their goals and that justify their actions on the basis of interpretations of Islam.

In other words, the conventional wisdom is that we have to understand that we have to understand them. We must dialog with them. The problem seems to me with this group therapy school of thought is that violence inspired by religious teachings is treated as a negotiable political matter rather than the uncompromising phenomena it is.

Consequently, the traditional approach to "come let us reason together" does not work with those who reject political pluralism and democratic values on theological ground.

We just have to look around the world and see what the experience of this group actually is, all the way from groups like Hamas or the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, or the Hezbollah, or the Islamic group Gama al-Islamiya in Egypt and so forth. It seems to me all

those believe that only violence is the proper path for liberalization of their Islamic nation.

And also, we can see that Islamic terrorism threatens other Arab and non-Arab countries such as the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, India, Pakistan and the Philippines. And obviously there is some inherent hostility of these groups toward the West.

And just look at the case of the United States, and look at the American experience, going all the way back to 1979 when the American embassy in Tehran was taken over, through the most recent attack on the World Trade Center and the conspiracy plot.

In short, it seems to me that Islamic terrorists perpetrate indiscriminate and large-scale terrorism less as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. What is of particular concern to me is the possibility, if not the probability, that some of the terrorists will have in their arsenal chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

Therefore, it seems to me that the support of terrorists by Sudan and Iran increases the risk that some of these Islamic groups would escalate to super-terrorism which would adversely affect civilized existence.

Now, if we look, of course, at the Algerian experience that some were focused on this morning, we have seen that the last 3 years Algeria has been placed among the top ten countries where terrorism constitutes an extreme risk to its society. And the numbers of incidents increased. But it is not just the number of the impact, particularly the political and psychological impact.

It seems to me, again, that if we look at the Islamic goal and the Islamic Salvation Army, we see they are known as friendly, which obviously relates to the utilization of psychological and physical force in violation of law.

Incidentally, in terms of completeness, on page 8 there is an error because we had used some of the older data. Obviously, Abbasi Madani is in jail, and his son lives in Frankfurt.

Now, also, we find that some of the leaders are no longer alive. For example, Abdelbaki was assassinated in Paris last year.

Now, the sources of support which are really critical are related to, for example, the financial, organizational and operational support, we find on the Iranian payroll and the Sudanese payroll. In addition to that, of course, we find the support in some of the parts of the Middle East and Europe and Asia.

Now, as we know, in Algeria the strategy to combat terrorism has been allocated to the police and army and also some special anti-terrorist courts.

What is of particular concern obviously is the fact that respect for human rights and the rule of law are deteriorating. I would like to mention, for example, the extrajudicial reprisal by vigilante armed anti-Islamic groups.

And, again, it seems to me that if the Algerian Government's anti-terrorism and counter-terrorism are to gain more credibility at home and abroad, then greater attention should be paid to human rights abuses.

Now, obviously, more difficult countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt will be at significant risk of being swept up should the FIS, for example, be successful in Algeria. The same is true in regard to other Moslem countries in Africa and Asia.

Therefore, some of these countries cooperate with the government of Algeria and also the Summit, for example, on African Unity condemned terrorist acts, and affirmed cooperation among Islamic countries.

In Europe, which is particularly affected by Algerian terrorism, we see countries like France and Belgium and Germany and others who are playing a role.

Clearly, the United States is concerned with the ramification of Islamic victory in Algeria which will not only raise the specter of similar upheavals in North Africa, but will also present a new challenge to western democracies.

But I see two problems related to the American response. First, is how to condemn and combat Islamic-based terrorist activity without appearing to be associated with an anti-Islamic policy.

And second, how to convince the American public that terrorism against one nation is terrorism against all nations, and therefore Algerian terrorism is not just a problem for Algeria, but also an American problem.

Finally, I wish to offer some general observations and recommendations.

One, terrorism is now an established mode of conflict. It will continue to persist beyond the year 2000.

Two, what raises the stakes of terrorism is the threat in the coming years you will see more actors with the intent and capability to use weapons of mass destruction.

Three, Islamic terrorism is an important element of low-intensity conflict.

Four, the perpetrators of Islamic terrorism target Arab and non-Arab states as well as pluralistic societies.

Five, although the Algerian terrorists remain highly divided, they have been able to jeopardize the overall security of the country, partly due to the external assistance of Iran and Sudan, and the continued assistance provided by supporters in the Middle East, Europe and the United States

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Dr. Alexander, if you could summarize.

Dr. ALEXANDER. Yes. Finally, what I would like to do is to suggest some steps to deal with the problem. One, develop a comprehensive program to increase public awareness concerning the nature of Islamic terrorism; two, strengthen the U.S. intelligence mechanism; three, deny supports of Islamic extremism in Algeria and elsewhere the capacity and the freedom to engage in propaganda campaigns and fund raising activities in the United States; four, expand U.S. counter-terrorism technical assistance to Algeria and other countries combatting Islamic extremism; five, encourage the Algerian Government to continue with its "carrot and stick" approach, and with its efforts to improve the economic and social conditions in the country; six, raise the diplomatic, economic, political and military costs to Iran and Sudan high enough to outweigh the benefits for the Algerian terrorism and exporting Islamic terrorism.

In short, a coherent and firm U.S. policy on responding to terrorism will increase public understanding and support.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Dr. Alexander.

Dr. ALEXANDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Alexander appears in the appendix.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Kaplan.

STATEMENT OF ROGER KAPLAN, EDITOR, FREEDOM REVIEW

Mr. KAPLAN. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I am delighted to be here at a hearing that reminds us that Algeria was one of the first countries that exercised the foreign policy minds of the Young Republic. It was also one of the first foreign policy problems that caused a great deal of talk, if I may say so with all due respect to people here, and not much action. The issue of the moment was, of course, the episode of the Barbary pirates.

During the early years of the Nineteenth Century, President Jefferson found that our shipping was disrupted in the Mediterranean by what were, if I may risk an anachronism, the terrorists of those years. They were seaborne and, under the nominal rule of the Ottomans, controlled the ports of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli.

President Jefferson had a hard time persuading Congress to allocate resources to fight the Barbary pirates, and it was not until the failure of one of our earliest experiences in what today we would call force projection, that Congress voted the funds necessary to send Stephen Decatur back to the coast of North Africa and clean the place up.

So it is not a new problem. But today, as Dr. Alexander points out, it is a very onerous problem because the consequences of a destabilized Algeria are enormous for us at home as well as among our allies in North Africa and Europe. As President Clinton said to my organization, the Freedom House, the other day, at a conference in Washington, we cannot think about domestic problems like terrorism anymore except internationally.

Well, I have written a statement which I will not trouble you with. It can be read by anyone who is interested.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. All of the written statements will be part of the record.

Mr. KAPLAN. Right, exactly. Thank you.

So all I want to do is say that there is a need for American intervention in the Algerian crisis. Intervening to promote peace and democracy will help our own security as well as the security of many, many good people who live in that rich and important country.

I cannot say exactly what that intervention should consist of, but it must help the Algerians toward a more free and open society. If that requires that law and order must first be established, that is for the experts to decide. I think law and order do not require that freedom and democracy be slowed down. The United States can have an influence by encouraging those forces in the government of Algeria and in Algerian society in general who want their country to play the role that geography has given it, the bridge between east and west, north and south.¹

Thank you very much.

¹Algeria can show that an Islamic society is compatible with a democratic state that respects non-religious but law-abiding citizens. It can be a model for economic development in the Mediterranean, and thus a powerful force for progress in sub-Saharan Africa. As you know, Islam is the fastest growing religion in Africa, and it can be a positive force if it shows how to reconcile the traditional values of religion with the values of a free society.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kaplan appears in the appendix.]

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Dr. Alexander, you have talked about the cost and the risk to Iran and Sudan; increasing that risk to their support for the terrorist movement in Algeria would be less attractive.

What, specifically, do you think that the United States could do to raise this cost to those countries?

Dr. ALEXANDER. I think the Administration and Congress, they are making some very realistic moves in terms of imposing economic boycotts, for example, and sanctions. Let us say, Iran, which is very much involved in intensive planning and development of, for example, weapons of mass destruction, and at the same time supporting revolutionary groups and supporting terrorism throughout the world, as we know.

So it seems to me that Congress is really moving in this direction, and now before Congress we have anti-terrorist legislation that should be considered and implemented as soon as possible, simply because of the nature of the threat.

So I believe we have wide options open to us to take appropriate actions.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. So you think we should be more aggressive?

Dr. ALEXANDER. Absolutely, and simply not look at terrorism as a nuisance, or even if it would go away, but as I said before, as a strategic threat, even if it happens in Algeria because of the threats elsewhere.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Yes, thank you.

Also, Dr. Alexander, in your testimony you had discussed the type of terrorism that existed in Algeria. You described it as a low-intensity conflict that we will be seeing more of as a low cost way to wage war.

What would you advise is the best response for Algeria, the United States and our allies to address the challenge posed by those terrorists?

Dr. ALEXANDER. Well, in the first place, obviously every government has a responsibility to protect its citizens at home and abroad, and as Algeria develops its own response capabilities, but as I indicated before, it seems to me that the problem with terrorism is not an isolated problem. It is the problem of the entire international community because the whole world is a front line, as we have seen very vividly for the past two decades.

So the United States particularly as the only super power and the major leader in international affairs, it seems has to pay much greater attention to the problem of Algerian terrorism. For example, as a high priority of consideration policies, the same way the United States, and rightly so, tries to deal with the threat to the peace process in the Middle East, and to somehow reduce the risk of terrorism to the Middle East countries, and those who would like to strengthen the peace process. So it is a really a question of focus, and it is a question of commitment.

There are many people in this country who do not care much about Algerian terrorism because it seems to be so far removed. And it seems to me that one of the great delusions is that one can separate domestic terrorism from international terrorism. And

therefore I think we have to look at the Algerian case much more seriously than ever before.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Dr. Alexander.

Mr. Kaplan, in your testimony you had discussed possible American intervention, perhaps involvement in Algeria. You had mentioned that law and order is the primary goal, something that needs to be done before anything else can take place, and you would let the experts decide if that were so.

Let us suppose you were in an expert role, and it is certainly a worthy goal to control the violence in that country. But how do you see it possible for this violence to be brought under control at any time in the near future? What factors do you think have to be in place?

Mr. KAPLAN. Well, since, Madam Chairman, you are giving me the rare opportunity to be an expert without taking any responsibility for my recommendation, I will say that I am second to none in supporting the idea that America can project its influence for good by the use, when necessary, of force. That is why I referred to the expedition against the Barbary pirates in the nineteenth century.

To the degree that we can develop a coherent policy to combat terrorism, we, of course, should do it. And to the degree that we can help the Algerian authorities maintain law and order in their country, we should. Although as the assistant secretary said a few minutes ago, we do not have very close relations at the military and intelligence level with the Algerian authorities.

But whenever the United States, and this is where I would offer my advice, whenever the United States has been influential by the use of its awesome force, whether it was the Civil War, World War I, or World War II, in which our victories represented advances for the cause of human rights, in the sense that the winning side in those conflicts defended despotic regimes. War should be avoided, but when it must come, then we must have a strategy to promote democracy when peace is restored. Democracy is less bellicose than despotism.

We can develop programs which will help the vast majority of Algerians who oppose violence. These people exist. They often will tell you with the irony that characterizes Algerians, that it is not a civil war that they are in, but a war against civilians, which is a much more accurate way to put it.

We can support the people who want to make of their country an open, liberal society. The programs exist. The State Department has USAID. There are autonomous agencies like the National Endowment for Democracy. There are private foundations, private organizations like Freedom House. But it requires that our experts, our diplomats, our soldiers, our sailors focus on the laudable task, which we should never be ashamed of, of bringing a good thing, namely liberty, to people who want it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Now your organization, Freedom House, has been studying the issues of democracy and human rights for many years.

In the situation in Algeria where the popular vote is to a regime with no commitment to democratic values, how realistic is it for us to encourage authoritarian regimes to move toward embracing

more liberal or democratic ideals when we know that the popular vote is the other way?

Mr. KAPLAN. Well, there is very little that you can do to influence a determined group that holds out in a country, especially where your own government has minimal relations with it. But it is our experience that you can help people in labor movements, in the business community, in the universities, in journalism, and even in the government. After all, government is made of people most of whom want to run their country decently, even in a country that is not democratic.

It is possible to find those people, and put them into programs—when I say programs, I mean contacts with us Americans, and Europeans also, as well as their neighbors, in Morocco and Tunisia and others in Africa, and show them that they do not have to fear freedom. You know that most people who are against freedom are afraid of it because they think that something awful will happen to them if they give up the tools of despotism.

But I will give you a good example. The Algerian Government liberated the newspapers and the trade unions a few years ago, under some pressure from public opinion. What had been a fairly controlled labor movement, more or less on the Soviet model—to make a use of an imperfect comparison—and a more or less controlled press, were opened up in a way that we certainly should not criticize knowing the long history of the European people.¹ Today, of course, trade unionists and journalists are being murdered in Algeria.

The only censorship in Algeria, except for some elements of the war movement, which I think every government has a right to censor to that extent, the only censorship in Algeria is past. But the newspapers are more than free. So, in other words, they can change. But you need both official government encouragement, government building, and private help.

Let me take one small example. Freedom House always has had programs for journalists which consist of giving them what we call seminars in Europe or the United States, in which you can call vacations to take some time off from very difficult situations, but which are also very valuable educational experiences in terms of the most useful thing to journalists, just to make new contacts.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. We call them fact-finding missions.

Mr. KAPLAN. Exactly. So you know all about them.

So there are things like that can be done, and there is nothing in the Algerian history to suggest that that will not be successful.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

Would you like to add anything, Dr. Alexander?

Dr. ALEXANDER. No, I will be brief.

In fact, the good news is that the Algerian Government tries to make some moves toward democracy. Obviously the whole free press and free society, so critical, and therefore the different terrorist groups in Algeria, they targeted particularly the journalists and media people in terms of assassination, bombing and so forth. In fact, all intellectuals which contribute so much enrichment of the society were targeted.

¹Knowing, that is, how long it took to develop free media and free labor movements in Europe.

So basically the phenomenon of terrorism, as we know, is the antithesis of democracy. One may call it even totalitarianism. And therefore we have to strengthen, and I surely agree with your remarks, all forces that are prepared to work with the United States and the free world in order to strengthen the value system's infrastructure in Algeria.

Mr. KAPLAN. Very specifically, Madam Chairman, to give you a specific example of what the U.S. Government could do right now. For reasons which are not dishonorable, the Algerian authorities are restricting the foreign press. I say not dishonorable because, after all, they are in a terrible situation and having to see to the security of people coming from abroad is one additional headache that they do not necessarily need now.

Nevertheless, I believe that it is a mistake. It is my own opinion, it is also the opinion of the Freedom House that as much as possible the media should be allowed to cover events there. Well, if it is possible to politely put pressure on the government to be less restrictive of the movement of foreign journalists to cover the situation, and similarly, the movement of, for example, labor activists who would like to stand by their colleagues and comrades, but cannot because of certain travel restrictions. That is a small thing, but things like this come up all the time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you.

I would like to thank the panelists for being here as well as the audience. There are many committee hearings going on at this time; Budget, Medicare, Judiciary and other committees are meeting, so the members have other responsibilities, and some of them could not be here with us.

We will be having, as you have heard, a closed briefing for the members on this issue this month.

Thank you so much for being here.

[Whereupon, at 11:18 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]

APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF REP. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OCTOBER 11, 1995

TERRORISM IN ALGERIA

I am pleased that the Chairwoman has called these hearings today. The question of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism across North Africa is a crucial one for the future stability of the region and the possible threat to the southern flank of NATO.

Ever since the Algerian military forced President Benjedid to resign and halted the parliamentary elections in the face of a likely victory by the Islamic Salvation Front, the level of violence and instability in Algeria has escalated. Indeed, the violence has already spread across the Mediterranean to France where bombings and the assassination of a prominent Muslim cleric have been attributed to Islamic fundamentalists.

Inside Algeria, the government has scheduled Presidential elections for next month, in which the major opposition parties have refused to participate and which Islamic radicals have vowed to disrupt. The elections are intended to establish a legitimate government but given the level distrust among the parties in Algeria it seems unlikely that the election will have the desired result. What seems more likely is that the vicious civil war will continue to escalate for the foreseeable future.

Among the questions I hope we can answer today are: to what extent is the Islamist movement inside Algeria a function of an orchestrated, international radical Islamist movement and what the U.S. policy response to Islamic fundamentalism ought to be.

I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses.



Terrorism in Algeria

Statement by

C. David Welch

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

for Near Eastern Affairs

Before the House International Relations Committee

Subcommittee on African Affairs

October 11, 1995

My name is David Welch, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs. I am pleased to have the opportunity to address the Subcommittee on "Terrorism in Algeria: Its Effect on the Country's Political Scenario, on Regional Stability, and on Global Security."

The U.S. has important national interests in the outcome of the present struggle within Algeria. We want to see a stable, friendly, and prosperous Algeria at peace with itself. U.S. policy responds to this crisis on several fronts -- by condemning terrorism, supporting economic reforms, and calling for a broadening of the political process. Neither the emergence of a fanatical regime in Algeria nor the descent of this important state into chaos are in the interest of the United States.

The Algerian crisis also has a regional dynamic which has repercussions for important U.S. allies. Beyond the far-reaching consequences for Algeria itself, gains by the most radical Islamists could embolden extremists in neighboring North African states such as Tunisia or Morocco -- key U.S. allies in the region. The Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) has claimed responsibility for terrorist bombing incidents in France. Ultimately, Algeria's crisis could provoke an influx of refugees into France and elsewhere in Western Europe.

U.S. policy in Algeria seeks to end the cycle of violence which accelerated in the aftermath of the canceled elections of 1992. Algeria's current crisis is rooted in frustrations arising from political exclusion, economic misery, and social injustice -- conditions which have facilitated the growth of an armed Islamist insurgency. Purely military means will not resolve this crisis. We believe a political solution involving dialogue between the regime and other elements of Algerian society prepared to eschew violence is the only viable alternative for the people of Algeria. We have conveyed this message both to elements of the opposition and to the highest levels of the Algerian government.

The U.S. endorses the government of Algeria's efforts to transform its state-controlled economy into a market economy. The U.S. supports the economic reform program which the Algerian government is implementing in coordination with the IMF. We joined with other creditors in rescheduling Algeria's public debt through the Paris Club. We are also working to protect the equities of U.S. private investment in Algeria, much of which is underwritten by our Government. Several hundred Americans work in Algeria's oil and gas sector and in the construction of an important gas pipeline to Spain. However, we continue to advise the Algerian government that economic recovery depends upon political reform.

Algerian society as a whole is paying a high price for this brutal internal conflict. Violence has risen steadily since the Algerian regime suspended the electoral process in 1992 and outlawed the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). In the early phase of the conflict, extremists on both sides believed violence could solve their problem. Both have been proved wrong. Nearly four years into the conflict, the regime shows no sign it can end the violent opposition through security measures alone. The armed Islamists are far from winning but show every sign they can continue to fight. Since 1992, an estimated 40,000 Algerians have died in the conflict between security forces of the regime and the Islamist insurgents. Many have been civilians. Violations of human rights have taken place on both sides, helping fuel acts of extreme violence within the armed conflict. Already in 1995, extremists of the GIA have killed 23 journalists, 16 foreigners, and numerous women and children in an effort to bring notoriety -- through terrorism -- to their cause.

Despite international calls for a broadening of the political process, including by France and other important EU allies, the government of Algeria has rejected consideration of a National Platform put forward by all major opposition parties which met in Rome under the auspices of the St. Egidio society, a lay Catholic organization. These parties together garnered 80% of the votes cast in Algeria's December 1991 elections. While the U.S. has not advocated a specific solution to the Algerian crisis, we have stated that, given the degree of popular support represented by the political parties which participated in the Rome meeting, it could serve as a basis for discussion of a process by which Algeria's crisis could be brought to a peaceful conclusion and a process of national reconciliation launched.

The Algerian government announced plans to hold presidential elections on November 16, 1995. Five candidates have qualified to participate in this election; however, none of them hails from Algeria's major opposition parties. The two main non-Islamist political parties, the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and the National Liberation Front (FLN), decided not to field candidates in the election on the grounds that these elections lack credibility. The FIS remains illegal and barred from political activity.

The Algerian people will need to judge the credibility and fairness of the forthcoming elections. Will they accept that the election marks a real departure from old styles of government repudiated by Algerians across the political spectrum? Will they vote in significant numbers? Will they accept that the results are honest?

Only if such conditions are met can the presidential elections help move Algeria toward national reconciliation and peace. The security environment in which the planned election will take place is difficult. One presidential candidate has already been assassinated. The GIA has adopted the banner "one vote, one bullet," and vowed to kill voters and election observers. The United States is firmly opposed to those who seek to impose their will on others by violent means.

I would like to commend the Chairwoman for calling today's hearing and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

TESTIMONY OF BRUCE RIEDEL, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
FOR NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA
11 OCTOBER, 1995

Madam Chairman, I'm pleased to be here this morning. I hope I can add to your understanding of the impact of civil conflict in Algeria on other regional states and US interests in the region.

In fact, Madam Chairman, US national interests in the Mediterranean dictate that DoD pay particularly close attention to the evolving security situation in Algeria. DoD has serious concerns about the turmoil in Algeria. A power vacuum in North Africa or a hostile government coming to power in Algeria carries very dangerous ramifications for which the US must be prepared. Sea and air transit routes through North Africa facilitate our military operations throughout the region. The US depends on sea lines of communications from the Strait of Gibraltar to the Suez Canal to allow the rapid deployment for naval forces from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. We need friendly nations in North Africa to support these operations or at least not to impede them. Likewise, air operations during initial deployments to the region and in support operations during a conflict depend on overflight and basing rights in North Africa.

Beyond operational requirements is the strategic interest in providing a stable Mediterranean on NATO's southern flank. Algeria itself has a significant military capability with Kilo submarines and SU-24 bombers and the largest military in North Africa after Egypt. If the Algeria situation deteriorates to full-scale civil war or Algeria becomes a hostile Islamic revolutionary state, these forces could rapidly complicate US military operations worldwide. Simultaneously, the chaos could rapidly spill over into neighboring states destabilizing North Africa and possibly southern Europe. Vulnerable neighbors like Tunisia and Morocco are success stories which contribute to the stability of North Africa. Both nations have made significant contributions to the Middle East peace process. Any breakdown of the integrity of the economic and political development of these two countries has serious consequences on US strategic interests throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

Preparations to protect US citizens abroad are a high priority. Algeria has the highest evacuation priority for United States European Command (USEUCOM) which maintains continuous contact with Embassy Algiers and coordinates planning for the evacuation of non-combatants

there with several NATO allies. These discussions, however, are limited to resolving conflicts in our respective evacuation plans and are not "combined planning" sessions.

We share the concern of southern Europeans that political turmoil in Algeria could escalate into a full-scale civil war, and that Islamic extremism could spread to other North African countries. We realize, however, that Islamic militancy is not a coherent or unified international political movement. It is but one of several responses to the perceived inadequacies of existing governments and that this anti-government sentiment is very nationalistic in character. Algeria, for example, is a state at risk under attack by a radical Islamist insurgency. The government, in essence the military, created the conditions which precipitated the violent opposition. Inadequate attempts at economic development and persistent efforts to maintain political control from a narrow political base alienated the population. Frequent violations of human rights and denial of civil liberties which we take for granted further eroded popular support. Finally, the government's decision to seek a military solution rather than seek a broader-based political solution guaranteed a violent and persistent opposition. Ultimately, government actions marginalized moderate elements of society and empowered Islamic radicals who enthusiastically took up the fight.

Containing this radical Islamic insurgency in Algeria requires stability in surrounding countries. In effect, we must enhance the security of surrounding countries and simultaneously encourage their economic and political development. Two of Algeria's neighbors, Tunisia and Morocco, are long-time allies. We engage both in regular joint exercises to demonstrate our support and enhance our joint operating capabilities. Tunisia's exercise program is by far the most robust. Eleven exercises a year employ naval, air, special warfare, and amphibious forces from both countries. Morocco's smaller program exercises air, naval and ground forces at least once a year. We have provided both countries with a modest International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. We regularly provide excess defense articles to both, but neither country currently receives Foreign Military Financing (FMF) or Economic Support Fund (ESF) allocations.

Furthermore, the US works bilaterally and in concert with NATO to maintain a dialogue with five North African and Middle Eastern countries-- Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, and Mauritania. It is important to deepen contacts with the stable and responsible countries of the Middle East and

North Africa The goal of such efforts are to enhance the security of nations around the Mediterranean and to improve their relations with each other.

DoD has never had close or extensive ties with the Algerian military. DoD has a limited direct role in Algeria. It is a role that has been peripheral to Algerian politics since the early days of the Algerian Republic simply because of the strong military relationship Algeria developed with the former Soviet Union. That strong military relationship did not encourage the attitudes and communications required to develop good, close and mutually beneficial military to military relations. The US still finances military training in the US for about 10 students a year in an effort to promote military professionalism and respect for democratic values and human rights. Beyond that, we have sold minimal quantities of non-lethal defense articles on a cash basis. As the civil conflict escalated in the last few years, DoD has reduced its already modest contacts with the Algerian military, but has tried to keep channels of communications open in an attempt to discourage abuses.

Madam Chairman, stability in North Africa is crucial to US interests. Stability is crucial to the economic and political development that stifle extremism. Algeria's neighbors will be the focus of DoD efforts in the near term. These efforts are critical to the maintenance of stability in the Mediterranean and North Africa.

ALGERIAN TERRORISM
SOME NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Statement by

Professor Yonah Alexander
Director, Terrorism Studies Program
The George Washington University

Before the
House Committee on International Relations
Subcommittee on Africa
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Room 2255, the Rayburn House Office Building

I. INTRODUCTION

I am Yonah Alexander, Director of the Terrorism Studies Program at the George Washington University since 1988. I also served as the Director of the Institute for Studies in International Terrorism, State University of New York (1977-1990) and as a Senior Staff Member in terrorism projects at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University (1978-1986).

I am grateful to the Subcommittee for having invited me to testify at this Hearing on "Terrorism in Algeria" because of its relevance to regional and global stability.

In my testimony at a Joint Hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 14, 1985, I stated that "My academic work in this important field of public concern convinces me that the problem of expanding terrorism is serious and poorly understood. Furthermore, the implications, both domestic and international, have scarcely been explored. Answers to terrorist problems are elusive and need much greater attention."

Today, a decade later, I am still convinced that the international community has failed to appreciate the nature, scope and intensity of the terrorist threat and therefore has not developed the commitment needed to deal with the challenge effectively.

Nowhere is this reality more apparent than in the Algerian case which is experiencing one of the most severe terrorist problems confronting contemporary society. Indeed, the effectiveness, and the impact on democratic values, of the means by which modern nation-states cope with terrorism will help to determine not only the future of terrorism but also the future of democracy itself.

And yet, numerous misconceptions related to the Algerian experience exist. These include the confusion over the meaning of terrorism in general and Islamic terrorism in particular; the

implications of Algerian terrorism for international security concerns; and the measures that can be used nationally and globally to address terrorism and enhance democratic values.

My brief remarks this morning will attempt to clarify some of these issues. They were discussed at the George Washington University seminar which I chaired on "Democracies' Responses to Terrorism: The North African Experience," on May 15, 1995. Participants included Ambassador Osmane Bencherif of Algeria, Ambassador Azouz Ennifar of Tunisia and Ambassador Robert Neumann (former U.S. Ambassador to Morocco). A summary of the seminar will be provided to the Subcommittee in the near future.

Today, I would like to present an overview of some conceptual and strategic aspects of Islamic terrorism; outline a profile of the Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, FIS); discuss several national, regional and global responses to Algerian terrorism; and offer several preliminary recommendations for future action.

II. ISLAMIC TERRORISM: AN OVERVIEW OF SOME CONCEPTUAL AND STRATEGIC ASPECTS

The major reason for the failure of the international community to understand the nature of the Algerian experience is the lack of consensus concerning what constitutes Islamic terrorism. In the first place, this general uncertainty ignores the distinction between "terrorism" and other factors included in low-intensity conflict. For example "insurgency."

Terrorism is the deliberate employment of violence or the threat of use of violence by a sovereign state or sub-national groups encouraged or assisted by sovereign states in order to attain strategic and political objectives. These unlawful acts are intended to create overwhelming fear in a target population larger than the civilian or military victims attacked or threatened.

On the other hand, insurgency is a condition of armed revolt against a recognized government that does not reach the level of organizing a revolutionary government or being recognized as a military belligerent. Its targets are usually military forces or installations, and it follows international rules of armed conflict. Insurgency actively seeks a basis of popular support for the goals it espouses and, if successful, would eventually conduct guerrilla operations and organize a revolutionary regime.

In the Algerian case, the sub-national groups that resort to terrorist methods are not "insurgents." Rather, they should be regarded as outlaws no matter how "noble" their objective might be. Consider the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front, FIS), seeking to turn Algeria into an Islamic state. To accomplish this objective, FIS and allied organizations such as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), have been waging a campaign of terrorism since 1992 against the Algerian government and secular persons and institutions. For the past three years, Islamic terrorism has also been directed against foreigners in order to drive away foreign investment and thereby cripple the Algerian economy and destabilize the government.

Furthermore, the Armed Islamic Group has been engaging in terrorist activities outside Algeria. Only last Sunday, on October 8, 1995, GIA's leader Abu Abderrahman Amin admitted in a fax sent to an international news agency in Cairo that its "fighters" carried out a wave of bombings in France which have killed seven people and wounded more than 130 since July. The purpose of these attacks is to pressure Paris to stop its support for the Algerian government.

Secondly, a serious misconception exists regarding the exact nature and implications of "Holy" terrorism in the name of "higher" Islamic imperatives. This threat is not confined solely to Algeria. It is rapidly becoming one of the most serious challenges to regional and global stability.

However, this threat does not come from traditional or even "fundamentalist" Islam, which is dedicated to the search for social and political organization on the basis of Islamic values. The true threat to the "New Middle East" and the "New World Order" comes from radical movements that use terrorism to achieve their goals and that justify their actions on the basis of misinterpretations of Islam.

An effective international response strategy to this threat must include a worldwide diplomatic offensive openly carried out and an intensive educational program to discredit these terrorists and their state supporters for their criminal behavior. Solutions will not be found in "group therapy" exercises that rationalize the problem and treat it as a manifestation of perceived grievances.

The conventional wisdom is as follows: "We have to understand them. They have perceived grievances against us. We must change our policies to alleviate these perceived grievances. We must dialogue with them." The problem with this "group therapy" school of thought is that violence inspired by "religious" (and therefore infallible) teachings is treated as a negotiable political matter rather than as the uncompromising phenomena it is. Consequently, the traditional approach of "come let us reason together" does not work with those who reject political pluralism and democratic values on theological grounds.

A brief overview of the global challenge of Islamic-based terrorism follows:

1. The charter of Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) asserts that "Moslems are under the obligation by order of the Prophet to fight the Jews and kill them whenever they find them." This open-ended call to violence is directed not only against "unbelievers" but also against those Moslems who "negotiated Palestine away to Israel." The current struggle for power between Hamas and the PLO-dominated Palestinian Authority vividly demonstrates this situation. Even if a PLO secular state is established in "Palestine," such an entity would be considered

"anti-Islamic in essence" and, therefore, Hamas would continue its "holy armed struggle until the victory of Allah is implemented."

2. The destruction of Israel is the prime objective of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Recently, a member of this group stated that "every school and hospital inside Israel, any place in which there are Jews, is a target for a suicide action." Furthermore, in defiance of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad asserted that "we will not give up our weapons or stop our *jihad*, our path to freedom, greatness and honor, our path to paradise."

3. Hizballah (Party of God) is engaged in a "sacred" terrorist war of attrition against Israel and its allies in southern Lebanon. It has also been responsible for major terrorist attacks in Buenos Aires, destroying the Israeli embassy in March 1992 and bombing the office building that housed many Argentine Jewish organizations in July 1994. Some 130 people were killed and more than 440 people were injured in these attacks. To be sure, Hizballah has other theological objectives. One immediate goal is to establish an Islamic Shi'ite state in Lebanon. The group also aspires to export the Islamic revolution and to create a world-wide Islamic republic headed by Shi'ite clerics.

4. The spread of Islamic-based terrorism has been most striking in North Africa. In addition to the Algerian case, in Egypt, the Gama al-Islamiya (Islamic Group), dedicated to overthrowing the secular government and replacing it with an Islamic state based on *sharia* (Islamic law), has perpetrated hundreds of attacks since 1992. The group believes "holy" violence is the proper path for the "liberation" of the Islamic nation from an "infidel" government and the "community of non-believers."

5. Islamic terrorism also threatens other Arab and non-Arab countries such as the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Turkey, India, Pakistan and the Philippines. In addition, the inherent

hostility of Islamic terrorist movements towards the West and western values could increase the level of "holy" violence against western countries and their citizens.

A case in point is the United States. A short list of attacks against the U.S. includes the 1979 takeover of the American embassy in Tehran; the 1983 killing of 241 soldiers in the bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut; and the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City.

In sum, "Islamic" terrorists perpetrate indiscriminate and large-scale terrorism less as a means to an end and rather as an end in itself. What is of particular concern is the possibility, if not the probability, that the arsenal of tomorrow's Islamic terrorists will include chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. The continuing support of Islamic terrorist groups by state governments, such as the Sudan and Iran (which is currently engaged in a multi-million dollar program to develop weapons of mass destruction of its own) increases the risk that Islamic super-terrorism will adversely affect civilized existence.

III. THE THREAT OF ALGERIAN TERRORISM: A CASE STUDY OF THE ISLAMIC SALVATION FRONT (FRONT ISLAMIQUE DU SALUT-FIS)

Since 1970 the threat to domestic and international order posed by terrorism has increased dramatically. Between 1970 and July 1995, a total of 64,319 incidents of terrorism were recorded. 51.3% of the total number of acts of political violence occurred since 1988.

For the past three years, Algeria has been placed among the "top ten" countries where terrorism constitutes an extreme risk to its society. During the 1992-94 period, a total number of 777 incidents were recorded. For the first six months of 1995, there were already 93 attacks representing a 54.1% increase over the average of 120.67 incidents per year for a seven and one-half period since 1988.

The major organization responsible for the escalation of terrorism in Algeria is FIS and its affiliated terrorist factions. The following description provides a short profile of the group:

IDEOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), a radical Islamic fundamentalist organization, seeks to turn Algeria into an Islamic state with a government based on *sharia* (Islamic law). To accomplish this objective, FIS is waging a war of terrorism against the government and secular institutions and persons in Algeria.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The FIS was formed in 1989 in opposition to the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN). In 1988, the Algerian government had begun a transition from a one party socialist state towards a multiparty parliamentary system. This movement towards democracy suffered an apparent reversal when the anti-democratic FIS received a majority of the votes in the December 1991 elections. FIS had vowed to turn the country into an Islamic state within a year of taking power. The FLN subsequently canceled parliamentary elections (scheduled for the end of January 1992), which would likely have given the FIS an absolute majority in the Algerian parliament.

In February 1992, riots, demonstrations, and terrorist operations orchestrated by the FIS followed the election cancellation. The Islamic Salvation Front was subsequently banned by the Algerian government. FIS launched an assassination campaign against Algerian government personnel at both the national and local levels. The Algerian military actively sought to counter the FIS with an all-out assault on the group's members. The last three years have seen violent clashes between the government's security forces and Islamic terrorists. Since the government instituted a state of emergency at the beginning

of 1992, approximately 30,000 people have been killed or injured in the conflict.

In September 1993, FIS and an allied organization calling itself the Islamic Armed Group began to target foreigners. The campaign seeks to drive away foreign investment in Algeria and undermine confidence in the government. Since that time, dozens of foreigners have been killed including French, Russians, Italians, Spaniards, and Croats.

A significant number of FIS leaders have taken refuge in France, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom since the beginning of 1992. In France, the leaders have been allowed to publish newspapers, raise funds, and recruit members from the local Algerian population. In addition to FIS leaders mentioned below, Lalali Said (an elected member of the Algerian parliament), Qamar Eddine Kherbane (formerly a member of the FIS Executive Committee), and Benlarache Cherif are living in France.

LEADERSHIP

Following the military coup in Algeria in 1992, many FIS leaders fled to Europe. They include:

- * Nasreddine el-Hamdi, now living in France. He was threatened with deportation from France, but has challenged the case in court.
- * Djaafar al-Houari, now living in France. He is the head of the French branch of the FIS, Fraternelle Algerienne en France (FAF).
- * Abbasi Madani, now living in Frankfurt, Germany. He was a professor at the University of Algeria.
- * Abdelbaki Sahraoui, now living in Paris. He is a founding member of FIS.
- * Rabah Kebir, now living in Aachen, Germany.

The FAF has a strong following among France's four million Moslems. Fugitives from Algeria are able to elude police with help of FAF. The FAF allows the FIS to liaison and possibly

coordinate activities with sympathetic organizations and persons outside of Algeria.

MEMBERSHIP

Official membership of the FIS is kept secret. Membership is stronger in urban areas than in rural areas of Algeria. Nevertheless, rural migrants are also drawn into the movement. FIS attracts considerable numbers of Algerian youth (More than 50% of the Algerian population is under the age of 20). A significant number of members are university and high-school students as well as the educated unemployed and the disgruntled lower class. The extent of the movement's national network is difficult to estimate.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

FIS raises the majority of its funding in Algeria through donations.

Iran provides FIS with a significant amount of financial, organizational, and operational support. This includes Iranian support for paramilitary training which has taken place in the Sudan. However, the movement's training primarily takes place in Algeria.

There are also links at the leadership level between the FIS and the Sudanese government as well as with Islamic movements in Egypt, Tunisia, and Pakistan.

TACTICS

The FIS has engaged in both legal and illegal means to achieve its goals. The movement organizes riots, engages in political assassination, attacks security forces, and has murdered foreigners. Although it also seeks to broaden its political base, both of its affiliates the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) and the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) have vowed to bomb polling stations and execute anyone attempting to vote in the November 1995 presidential elections.

TARGETS

Government employees, police and security forces, local and national officials, and government facilities are targets. Other victims also include journalists, physicians, and other professionals. Since September 1993, Western targets have been singled out as well. FIS had avoided targets that would adversely affect the Algerian economy. The order to attack foreigners suggests that this is no longer the case. Also, attacks such as destroying freight trains may represent a turning point in the strategy of the Islamic Salvation Front.

IV. NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL RESPONSES TO ALGERIAN TERRORISM

Despite the Algerian government's effort gradually to democratize the country starting in 1989 when President Chadli Benjedid legalized all religious parties, veterans of the Afghan war formed "guerrilla" groups in Algeria. They mounted various anti-government activities after FIS won the first round of elections. Some of the leaders asserted: "No law. No constitution. Only the laws of God and the Koran."

As a result, the government in 1992 canceled the second round of voting, declared a state of emergency, and formally banned FIS. The Armed Islamic Group (GIA) was formed and steadily intensified its campaign to overthrow the government. GIA violated many democratic values such as respect for the integrity of the person (e.g. freedom from political killing) and respect for civil liberties (e.g. freedom of speech and press, freedom of religion).

The victims of GIA terrorism include innocent civilians, government officials, and members of the security forces. Many are selected for assassination, notably politicians, industrialists, labor leaders, intellectuals, journalists and foreigners. Special mention should be made of the assassination of President Mohammed Boudif, former Prime Minister Kasdi Merbah, and more recently the killing of former Interior Minister

Aboubaker Belkaid.

Other victims are killed or injured by indiscriminate attacks such as car bomb attacks. Women are also targeted, particularly if they declined to adopt Islamic fundamentalist views and norms. Finally, minorities are threatened and the GIA declared its intention to eliminate "Jews, Christians, and polytheists from Islam's land in Algeria."

As a result of the wave of terror and intimidation, the Algerian regime's five-man High State Committee, which served as the country's collective presidency, was replaced in January 1994 with a former general, Liamine Zeroual, who assumed the presidency of a "transitional" government. Because of the failure of his efforts to conduct informal negotiations with imprisoned FIS leaders, Zeroual announced his intention to hold presidential elections in November 1995.

At the same time, the state's security apparatus, which includes the police, the gendarmerie and the army, became involved in major efforts to combat terrorism. Special anti-terrorist courts have been formed under the emergency laws. What is of particular concern is the fact that as a result of intensive governmental counter-terrorism activities, respect for human rights and the rule of law are deteriorating. Mention should be made of extrajudicial reprisals by vigilante armed anti-Islamist groups, such as the Organization of Young Free Algerians (OJAL), suspected as a front for certain elements of the regime's security forces.

If the Algerian government's counter-terrorism efforts are to gain more credibility at home and abroad, then greater attention should be paid to human rights abuses. For instance, reprisals by vigilante groups should be curtailed.

To be sure, responses to Algerian terrorism require regional and global responses. In North Africa, countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt will be at significant risk of being swept up should FIS be successful in Algeria. The same holds true of other Moslem countries in Africa and elsewhere which are concerned with

the dangers of religious extremism and terrorism.

It is not surprising, therefore, that many of these countries cooperate with the international community in taking a common stand against terrorism. For instance, the Summit on African Unity in 1995 condemned terrorist-acts, affirmed the commitment of African nations not to harbor terrorists, presented a code of conduct against religious extremism, and affirmed cooperation among Islamic countries.

In Europe, several countries affected directly by Algerian terrorism have responded unilaterally. In France, where the Algerian-based terrorism is gaining a foothold, the government responded over the years by such means as rounding up Islamic radicals, seizing arms caches, and ending the hijacking of an Air France airliner. The latest example of French counter-terrorist action is the shooting of Algerian-born Khaled Kelkal some ten days ago. French officials linked Kelkal to six bomb attacks that killed seven people and injured more than 130.

Since Algerian terrorism also affects Belgium, the government has taken some steps to deal with the challenge. For instance, Belgium conducted sweeps last spring that resulted in a number of arrests of suspected terrorist supporters. Early this month, a Belgian court convicted seven alleged members of GIA for a variety of offenses. During the trial some 50 bomb threats were received, but no bombs were found or exploded.

Germany is also concerned with Algerian terrorism and has joined France and Belgium in taking the offensive against FIS members in the country. For example, Germany has maintained a close watch on FIS leader in exile, Raban Kebir. Also, the German police conducted several raids last spring and seized weapons and money destined for Algeria.

The U.S. is naturally concerned with the ramifications of an extremist Islamic victory in Algeria which will not only raise the specter of similar social upheavals in North Africa and elsewhere but will also present a new challenge to Western democracies.

There are two problems to be considered in connection with an adequate U.S. response to Algerian terrorism. First, is how to condemn and combat Islamic-based terrorist activity without appearing to be associated with an anti-Islamic policy. And second, how to convince the American public that terrorism against one nation is terrorism against all nations and therefore Algerian terrorism is not just a problem for Algeria but also an American problem.

The hearing today and the various legislative initiatives before Congress will help articulate realistic policy options, create and implement an effective strategy, and most importantly, promote vigorous international cooperation to combat terrorism.

V. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Having studied the problem of terrorism over three decades, I wish to offer some general observations:

1. Terrorists are not born as terrorists but are instead created by particular historical, sociological, economic, and political conditioning process. Unlike ordinary criminals, terrorists are ostensibly dedicated to some ideological, religious or political cause.

2. In contrast to their historical counterparts, modern terrorists have introduced into contemporary life a new kind of violence in terms of technology, victims, threat and response. The globalization and brutalization of modern violence make it abundantly clear that we have entered a new "age of terrorism" with all its frightening ramifications.

3. Terrorism poses many threats to contemporary society, and it is likely to have a serious impact on the quality of life and on orderly, civilized existence. Perhaps the most significant dangers are those relating to the safety, welfare and rights of

ordinary people, the stability of the state system, the health and pace of economic development, and the expansion or even the survival of democracy.

4. Terrorism is becoming a form of surrogate warfare, whereby small groups with direct and indirect state support are able to conduct political warfare at the national level, and ultimately may even succeed in altering the balance of power on the international level.

5. Although predictions are hazardous, one can assume that terrorism is now an established mode of conflict. It will continue to persist beyond the year 2000 because many of the causes which motivate terrorists will remain unresolved, and new ideological and political confrontations will emerge within and among nations.

6. What raises the stakes of terrorism in the new "world order" is the threat that the coming years may see more actors (nations, organizations and individuals) with the intent and capability to use weapons of mass destruction, greater availability of the knowledge and technology needed to manufacture and deliver such weapons, and the availability of many vulnerable targets.

7. Islamic terrorism is an important element of low-intensity conflict; it is a calculated means for psychological-military struggle short of conventional warfare undertaken by sub-state groups as well as states in order to achieve political and strategic objectives.

8. As a strategic tool of politics in the struggle for power within and among nations, the perpetrators of Islamic terrorism target Arab and non-Arab states as well as pluralistic societies such as those in Israel, France and the United States.

9. Although the Algerian terrorists remain highly fractionalized, they have been able to jeopardize the overall security in the country, due partly to the external help from Iran and Sudan as well as the continued assistance provided by supporters in the Middle East, Europe and the U.S.

10. With the presidential elections just over a month away, the potential for escalated Islamic terrorist activities increases not only in Algeria but also in European countries such as France.

In sum, the fundamental question is how can democratic societies contain terrorism without jeopardizing their value systems (e.g. protecting constitutional rights such as prohibitions against unreasonable searches and seizures).

A strategy to cope with the general threat of terrorism should include the following elements:

1. A coherent, high-priority national policy upon which there is widespread consensus.
2. An efficient organizational structure
3. Quality intelligence assets and operations
4. A strong law enforcement mechanism
5. A fair and just governmental system
6. Effective international cooperation

Although it may be presumptuous to offer definitive suggestions as to how to cope with Islamic extremism in general and Algerian terrorism in particular, it might be useful to consider some preliminary steps:

1. Develop a comprehensive program to increase public awareness concerning the nature of Islamic terrorism as a form of low-intensity warfare being waged against pluralistic societies and friends of the U.S., such as Algeria.
2. Strengthen the U.S. intelligence mechanism in order to provide more effective collection and analysis of data related to Islamic-based terrorism.

3. Deny supporters of Islamic extremism in Algeria and elsewhere the capacity and freedom to engage in propaganda campaigns and fundraising activities in the U.S.

4. Expand U.S. counter-terrorism technical assistance to Algeria and other countries combatting Islamic extremism, particularly training for internal security organizations, police agencies and the military.

5. Encourage the Algerian government to continue with its "carrot and stick" approach, and with its efforts to improve the economic and social conditions in the country.

6. Raise the diplomatic, economic, political and military costs to Iran and Sudan high enough to outweigh the benefits of supporting Algerian terrorism and exporting Islamic terrorism elsewhere.

In sum, a coherent and firm U.S. policy on responding to terrorism will increase public understanding and support. Otherwise, we will remain hostages to ideological, theological, and political blackmailers well into the 21st century.



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WASHINGTON OFFICE
1319 14TH STREET, NW
SECOND FLOOR
WASHINGTON, DC 20036-1802
TEL. 202-296-5101
FAX 202-296-5078

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TESTIMONY OF
ROGER KAPLAN
EDITOR, **FREEDOM REVIEW**

BEFORE THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA

ON

ALGERIA

OCTOBER 11, 1995
WEDNESDAY

FREEDOM HOUSE
HEADQUARTERS
120 WALL STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10005
TEL. 212-514-8040
FAX. 212-514-8050

Summary points

(in response to Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen's questions)

1. The "overall effect on Algerian society": obviously, the effect of the present conflict is appalling. Between 40-60 thousand killed in three years of violence, interruption of a transition toward democratic society, emigration of thousands of well-trained people, whom Algeria needs, disruption of economic life and the transition from statist command economy toward a more liberal, market economy.

2. Human rights abuses: widespread, at every level, to wit: murder is cheap; banditry flourishes in midst of anarchy; judicial process under strain; rights of press and information curtailed (censorship by government, murder of journalists by insurgents); widespread abuse of women. (Freedom House's Comparative Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties rates Algeria as "Not Free.")

3. Differences and similarities between Islamic factions: This is a subject that must be approached with more expertise than I have; however, as far as the fighting factions are concerned, as opposed to those who have accepted the basic legitimacy of the Algerian state and are fielding candidates, the differences are mainly of degree: for in rejecting the basic legitimacy of the state, they have invited their followers to take up arms. This said, there are, evidently, degrees of savagery, with the "mainstream" FIS (Islamic Salvation Front) having never openly advocated terror, only "legitimate defense" against "armed representatives of the state", ie police and army; while the nebulous GIA (Armed Islamic Group(s)) has claimed responsibility for acts of indiscriminate terror, murders of women, etc.

4. Threat to democracy: Well, there certainly is a threat to democracy, but bear in mind that Algeria was not democratic before the disorder started, it was in the midst of a transition to democracy. The war is making democracy impossible, but I believe there is a strong chance for democracy if (or rather when) order is restored.

Experts will disagree among themselves about the compatibility of democracy and "Islamic fundamentalism". In my view there is no incompatibility between Islam and democracy. As to what we call Islamic fundamentalism, more properly called political Islam or "Islamism", there is a certain incompatibility to the degree that Islamism is an enemy of the open society. However, Islam can be a very constructive, positive force in Africa (and elsewhere), and we should be very careful in how we evaluate its political meaning. What we do know is that we can judge democrats by their works: whatever their beliefs or non-beliefs, you can judge whether they respect democracy, constitutionalism, etc.— and, in Africa as in the lands of Arab Islam (Algeria is both), it is not the believers or non-believers, as such, who have been the enemies of freedom and democracy, it is the political thugs.

5. Prospects for the future: the fact is, Algeria has a bright future. More exactly, Algerians have a bright future. The best way to insure it is to give support, USG and private organisations, to Algeria's many democratic, freedom-loving people, whose voices today are drowned out by the car bombs and the Kalashnikovs of the fanatics and hard men on both sides of this conflict.

My name is Roger Kaplan, and I am honored to be before this committee. I believe the crisis in Algeria is of grave concern to our country, and I am encouraged that Congressmen are taking an interest.

As you know, the magazine I edit is published by Freedom House, a 54-year old organization that is nonpartisan and is dedicated to the promotion of free societies and democracy the world over. As President Bill Clinton observed when he addressed Freedom House's conference on foreign policy here in Washington last week, there is no way to deal with problems like terrorism -- and many others -- unless we think internationally. Algeria is an important country -- it should concern us. It faces problems, including terrorism, that concern us, just as nearly two hundred years ago the pirates of the Barbary Coast -- yesteryear's terrorists -- concerned us. If Algeria concerned President Jefferson, enough to send Cmmdr. Stephen Decatur to its shores, it should surely concern us.

I should state right off that I am no expert on Algeria, never have been there. My knowledge of the history and present crisis in Algeria is based on the fact that my magazine, Freedom Review, was one of the first, if not the very first, American publication to cover the present crisis in any sort of depth. We published our first report from Algeria months after the electoral process was interrupted in January 1992: this is generally acknowledged to have been the pretext for the war of terror and counter terror Algeria is now engulfed in -- although, of course, the deep social and historical causes for the Algerian crisis run much deeper. Since that pioneering article, which is included in the package of I have prepared for your attention, Freedom Review has continued to cover the Algerian drama. I have written in my own magazine and other newspapers and magazines editorial comments and analytical articles, based on two kinds of information: 1) a good network of Algerian sources in Algeria and France: as you know, there is large Algerian emigration in France, as high as 4 million people depending on how you count; and 2) serious if necessarily amateurish study of Algerian history, which is very closely intertwined with French history since 1830. I know France fairly well, having lived and worked there for several years, notably as a Readers Digest editor. I do not speak Arabic, but, as you know, the languages of Algeria are Arabic, French, and Tamazirt, the language of the Berbers, the indigenous (pre-Arab) people of North Africa.

There are at least four reasons why Algeria is important to the United States.

First, it is a rich country. Wealth is not in natural resources alone -- of which Algeria has plenty. Wealth is not only in its position as a commercial crossroads, situated on the southern littoral of the Mediterranean and a natural hub between Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. Wealth is primarily in people. And Algeria is rich in people, representing many traditions, cultures, ideas. These people are educated, young -- more than half of Algeria's 27 million people are under 30 --, representing a potential market that is very substantial for both European and American traders, and itching to apply their skills and their cosmopolitan outlook to constructive endeavors that will contribute to African, Mediterranean, and no doubt Middle Eastern peace and prosperity.

Algeria's rich cultural traditions include legacies handed down by Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. It is a melting pot, with a deeply ingrained sense of respect for differences and diversity, but which has been wracked at different times in its history by eruptions of violence and fanaticism -- due principally to the inability of the traditional clans, tribes, Ottoman, French, and finally national governments to develop and maintain a political system able to give people confidence that their liberties and rights were respected and protected, and that disagreements could be worked out in law rather than by appeals to force. Algeria is an advanced country which has failed to develop a viable political culture. Which is another reason for the importance of events there today.

It is another reason because in its chronic political anarchy, Algeria, unfortunately, resembles many countries of Arab Islam, even though in many way -- cultural, geographic, and even religious, Algeria is included in this vast and important civilization only because we do not understand it very well, and in particular the reasons why it should not be included in this zone. But the point is that if Algeria cannot develop and maintain a liberal democratic regime, an open society based on free economic activity and the rule of law, with a free press and a tolerant culture, it will be very hard to see how other countries of Arab Islam, particularly the Middle Eastern countries more accurately defined as being in this zone, can ever achieve such regimes. And if Arab Islam and democracy are incompatible, our country, and particularly our foreign policy establishment, should know about it. The policies appropriate to dealing with democratic states are, obviously, different from those we would apply to undemocratic states.

I am no foreign policy analyst, Mr. Chairman, but I might illustrate my meaning simply by recalling that President Thomas Jefferson dealt with the Barbary Pirates -- in some sense the ancestors of today's Algerians, or at least of some of them -- by sending one of our great naval heroes, Cmmdr. Stephen Decatur, to bombard their ports and cities, in retaliation for the terror and larceny they practiced on the high seas.

Instead of enjoying and putting to constructive use their rich traditions and educated young people, the Algerians are killing one another. Algeria is situated, as I said, at a crossroads, betwixt several regions that have not been notable for producing peaceful, law-abiding, politically civil societies. Algeria falls under the purview of your committee, and I scarcely need to tell you that Africa -- in all its diversity -- has not been a shining model of political stability. Few countries in Africa are what we would call liberal democratic regimes.

Of course, as you know, Algeria also is often assimilated to the Middle East. Most Middle Easterners, and indeed most Algerians, are skeptical of such a classification, and they know that it reflects a certain misconception, I won't say a racist misconception, inherited from the brutal French colonial domination of this and other North African countries, of the people who live here. Still, it is true that Algeria in some ways falls into what we call the civilizational area of Arab Islam. And there is a serious question -- it exercises first rate minds, not to mention ordinary people -- whether the societies in this zone, which stretches from the Atlantic to the shores of India, can create liberal democratic regimes.

Now I do not want to go into this complex issue, but I want to say why it is especially important that Algeria be given consideration when this issue is discussed. With the possible exception of Lebanon, which came unglued in a rather awful way twenty years ago and still has not recovered, Algeria is the country of Arab Islam -- and, again, I insist we must add the caveat, 'to the degree it belongs to Arab Islam' --, the country of this zone that had the best chance -- and I would immediately add still has the best chance -- to make the successful transition into a regime that, without renouncing its rich traditions, can take

its place among the zone that we belong to, the zone of liberal democratic regimes where, in general, differences are resolved through law rather than force.

Algeria is important for a third reason. This is that many Algerians are not in Algeria. Algeria is rather like Italy in the 19th and early 20th Century. It is exporting many of its best people. They may or may not be educated, but they are determined, enterprising, courageous, strong -- the qualities that our immigrant grand fathers and great grand fathers had. And it is unfortunate that they are not coming here. We would immensely benefit from their resourcefulness. They are emigrating to western Europe. There are between two and three million Algerian nationals in the countries of the European Union (the EC, mainly France), and there are maybe four million French citizens who are first or second generation citizens, having been Algerians until recently or children of Algerian immigrants. The French are not good at keeping "ethnic" censuses so these numbers are vague, and it is to the French's credit I should say, and partly -- very partly -- atones for the beastly racist colonialist policies they applied in Algeria for a century and a half.

Now these immigrants are important, because they mean there is an Islamic population in Christendom. I should say a growing Islamic population. Christendom is not very Christian, outside the U.S. and a few outposts such as Ireland and parts of Italy, I am afraid, but I can assure you that to Islamic minds, the secular and liberal West, where Christians are treated as just one other pressure group, is very much a monolithic civilization; and it is assumed to be Christian.

It is extremely important that the Islamic populations in Christendom become good citizens. They are, overwhelmingly. But to a degree that we cannot estimate with precision, their loyalty to the public customs and laws of their new countries depends on maintaining reasonably good relations with the countries of Arab Islam. However, it will be impossible to maintain good relations with these countries if the only models are Syria or Iraq --brutal police states run by thugs -- or Saudi Arabia or Kuwait -- brutal nepotistic theocracies run by despots. There must be a third way, and that is where Algeria represents such a great disappointment, but also, still, so much hope.

Algeria was supposed to be a country that combined tradition and modernity. There is a great deal of literature on this, on why it should have happened but did not quite happen. I will be happy to direct you or your staff to this literature, and it is also easy for Freedom House to organize study seminars, here or anywhere else, that will bring together the best and most knowledgeable people on this question. It is a question which our government ought to take seriously, because it has much to tell us about membership in the community of open, liberal democratic societies that we know is the prerequisite for the 21st century.

However, suffice it to say here that there is no reason why Algeria should be forever unable to combine Islamic tradition and political, social and economic modernity.

It is extremely important, Mr. Chairman, that the U.S. be clearly identified with the movement toward democracy in Algeria. We should make it clear that we stand for free expression, free speech, and fair elections -- and I emphasize the plural. The threat of Algerian Islamism, according to its detractors, is that it was prepared to give one man one vote, once. The fear was that as soon as they were in power, the Islamists would have taken away the vote, first from women, then from men. I will leave it to experts on radical Islamic movements to tell you whether this was a reasonable concern. What is clear today is that to the Algerians who are not resorting to guns and hatchets and knives, democracy has got to be better than the alternative, which is the slaughter we are witnessing now.

These are the people on whose side we should be. We must support the democratic third force.

I am not foreign policy expert. I do not know what we are supposed to do, practically speaking, to support the democrats in Algeria. I am a writer and journalist and my concern is to report and allow others to report, as freely as possible. Perhaps there are programs, wisely conceived by our government, that are designed to help Algerians tell their story to the world. I am aware that Freedom House, my parent organization, proposed to help organize such a program when the trouble in Algeria was just beginning. So, we are willing and able to offer ideas on this, for further refinement by the experts in our government's foreign policy making apparatus.

I also believe we should be supporting free elections. Again, I am not expert and I do not know how, or even, strictly speaking, why, they U.S. should support free elections in a foreign country. The general reasons why it is in our interest for Algeria to take the liberal democratic road I have expressed just now: specifically what our government should or can do, however, I must leave to the experts. For what it is worth, I will simply mention that the Algerians are having an election on November 16.

This election is for the presidency of the republic. It is an election under universal suffrage, above 18 years old. It is of course not for me to tell Algerians what to do, but my non-expert sense of it is that they should be encouraged to have this vote, and we should show respect for it if it takes place in more or less fair conditions.

We should not insist that this election be as fair and free as an election for municipal councilor in, say, a small English town. We should have no illusions about the conditions under which this election is going to take place.

Just about every Algerian by now has seen, in his own family, how far the hard men on both sides are willing to go. He understands why the hardest line generals are called "eradicators". He understands why the Islamists are absolutely convinced of being in "jihad", holy war. The end justifies every single conceivable means.

Under these conditions, just saying you were participating in this election was to put yourself in mortal danger, and in fact to my knowledge at least one, maybe two, of the declared candidates were assassinated this summer. Also, each candidate was required to obtain 75 thousand signatures, with certain proportion from, if my information is correct, each of the country's willayas, or districts. If you were a normal person and you knew that the civil service is thoroughly infiltrated by informants for all the factions in this war, would you put your name on anything you did not absolutely have to?

And yet, there are at least the following important and to some degree representative candidates:

- 1) Major-General Liamine ZEROUAL. Born 1941. Career Army man, Minister of Defense in 1993. Has been associated with the group known as "reconciliators" within the army, but was unsuccessful in starting a dialogue with the Islamist leaders. Note that hardliners on both sides oppose all dialogue, holding "reconciliators" on both sides hostage.
- 2) Reda MALEK. born 1931. Took part in independence war and was FLN spokesman during the last stages of the negotiations with France. Editor of FLN newspaper and ambassador to the most important posts (Moscow, London, Washington, Paris) and was a minister under President Boumedienne. Hardline nationalist ideologue, he belongs to the

"eradicationist" side. Admits that "Arab nationalism" was a failure, and now sees himself as the Algerian Kemal Ataturk. He was prime minister in 1993.

3) Mahfoud NAJINAH. born 1942. He is the leader of Hamas, which in Algeria represents a moderate Islamic faction, committed to law and order and democracy. He never belonged to the FIS, although he had been active in Islamist circles and had served time in jail for his activities. The FIS leader Madani has accused him of being a stooge for the regime, and the GIA (extreme Islamist bands) has condemned him to death.

4) Nourredine BOUKROUH. born ? -- head of Algerian Renewal, another moderate, and "modernising" Islamist party.

There is no way to predict how these elections will take place. Will people fear the threats by the radicals to shoot at voters and bomb polling stations? Will the army, police, and local militias (to different degrees supervised by the army) be able to assure enough security to encourage a respectable number of people to risk their lives in a trip to the polling place? Will the polling places be intimidating to ordinary people, or will there be something approaching a free a secret ballot?

I have no answers. I only know that early in the 19th century, one of America's great sailors, Cmmdr. Stephen Decatur, taught the pirates of the Barbary Coast a lesson. When you think about it, it was the same lesson that we taught Saddam Hussein, nearly two centuries later. The lesson was that you messed with our great Republic at your own risk. Unfortunately, the message in both cases was also that if you lay low, we left you alone. If we had insisted on some follow up, in Algiers and Tripoli and, years later, Baghdad, the world would be a safer place and the peoples of Algeria (like those of Iraq) would owe us one.

If we are the beacon of liberty in the world, and if we insist of free elections, we should, I think, be prepared to follow up.

Mr Chairman, you are concerned in these Hearings with the human rights situation in Algeria. Well, the most cursory reading of the French and Algerian press, both available here without much difficulty, suffices to tell you there is something dreadfully wrong in that department. It is reliably estimated that between 40 and 60 thousand people have been killed since the war -- call it a civil war or more precisely a war against civilians -- began in 1992 or, if you go by the government's view, 1991. The government argues that the war was launched by the Islamic radicals in 91, or even earlier, when they began a campaign of violence. The Islamists claim the violence began when, in the wake of the cancelled elections, the government, which they refer to scornfully as the junta to reflect that it dominated by army generals, arrested their leaders and sent many of their activists to detention camps. Some were tortured. Others never were heard from again.

Today, even as we speak, the following types of human rights abuses are taking place in Algeria:

1. abuse of the right to live: car bombs are killing indiscriminately; armed bands are stopping vehicles and killing the travellers; schools have been attacked and bombed; villages have been strafed from the air, napalmed, attacked with artillery; I could go on. I

am not an eyewitness and I do not have absolute documentary proof; but there are enough allegations from all sides to render this credible.

The abuse of the right to live has been aimed at women and what we would call "innocent bystanders", with a savagery that seems to be peculiar to this war -- though its roots go back to the way the war with France was fought (on both sides) in 1954-62. As best I have been able to figure, between three and five hundred women, ranging in age from teens to 60's, have been killed specifically as women. There seems to be no other reason. Some were wives or relatives of representatives of the state; some were human rights activists; but it seems the principal motivation was that they were women and someone or some violent band out there is trying to send them a message of terror.

Of course, many women are among the tens of thousands killed in crossfire, bombings, straffings, etc.

2. abuse of the right to information: at least sixty journalists have been murdered, including some of the country's most prominent newsmen, and including young journalists who could not be accused of anything but wanting to do their jobs. Apart from murder, you could argue, depending on how you feel about a government's control of war news, that the government has censored news, particularly information pertaining to the violence.

3. judicial abuses: there are credible reports, notably from Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International and human rights organisations in Algeria (many of whose members have been murdered, and labor organisations in Algeria (whose members also have been murdered -- hundreds, according to the ICFTU in Brussels), that judicial safeguards are not respected by the government. There is detention without trial, there are reports of torture; intimidation and interference with defense lawyers; secret trials.

I do not have reports on the sort of justice the Islamic radicals are practicing, but the evidence suggests it is not giving the accused much chance to defend themselves. There are reliable reports that many people are killed because an Islamic group decides they have infringed on a religious precept -- for example playing music at a wedding --, and they are not given a chance to defend themselves. On this score, by the way, I should mention the Islamists have forbidden music, or at least certain types of music, including the popular rai music that comes from Oran, and musicians have been killed, kidnapped, or driven to exile.

Well, this could go on, but I think you see that the abuses of human rights in Algeria must be having a rather dampening effect on Algerian society overall, if I may address your question. But it is important, too, to understand that the human rights situation in Algeria has been bad in the past, too. In other words, it is possible to imagine things getting better.

I do not know how to "make" foreign policy. It is a domain with its own expertise. But I do know that the U.S., to the extent that is possible, must be identified with the still-vibrant, still-real hopes for democratic change in Algeria.

This means, at some level, and in ways that the foreign policy experts can best figure out how to do, the following:

1. We must make it clear that we support the electoral process that is now, again, underway in Algeria.

We do not have to say the presidential election scheduled for November 16 is perfect. We could, I should think, be sufficiently modest to grant that, at least, it is in its own way

no worse than the kinds of elections I remember from my Chicago days, in the last years when the father of that great city's present mayor gave it a national reputation, not entirely undeserved, as the city that worked -- and when his supporters still liked to quote the words of a downtown alderman, "Chicago ain't ready for reform."

However imperfect the November 16 election, it is the necessary counterpart of the army's recent successes in the field. While I cannot speak as an eyewitness, I have it from good sources in a sufficiently wide number of places in and out of Algeria to believe the government when it says it is presently gaining the upper hand against the Islamic warrior bands. The very fact that we have heard of a large number of spectacular terrorist acts in recent weeks, notably car bombs, would, at the tactical level, confirm this. No longer able to confront the army conventionally, or even in the hit-and-run tactics of guerrillas, the Islamists are reduced to classic terrorism. I am not one to take pleasure in this fact. The army is brutal, and there is no doubt that it is not following the Queensberry Rules in achieving its mastery of the field, if that is indeed what it is doing. For the Algerian people, this is not good news.

But it is a fact that in war there is no substitute for victory, and in this war someone has to win if the longer term interests of the Algerian people -- notably peace and security -- are to be protected. If the army can restore order, then let it. But let us insist that it owes it to its own honor, as well as to a decent regard for world opinion, to accompany its victory with the resumption of the electoral process that was ruptured in 1992.

So, we must insist, private NGOs and U.S. government, that the election happen. I think the U.S. should demand to be included in election-watching teams. The U.S. government should pressure the Algerian government to allow election observers and journalists to enter the country and report freely on the conditions under which the election and its aftermath take place. Having myself applied for a journalist's visa to the Algerian government, I know they are not being especially forthcoming in this department. To some extent their recalcitrance is understandable -- they have more important things to worry about, but it is also certain that they are trying to "manage" information.

I might add in parenthesis that Freedom House is able willing and ready, with many years of experience in election-monitoring in all kinds of situations, to cooperate with this Committee in quickly organising an election-monitoring team, which ideally would be made up of private-sector political scientists, human rights types, journalists, and USG personnel. But I point out to you that to be effective this team should be on the ground in Algeria by November 10 at the very latest, in order to spend a week taking the on-the-ground pulse of the scene before the election.

Second, we should insist, USG and private NGOs both, that the Algerian government, no matter who wins this presidential election, move quickly toward the next stage of the electoral process, which means votes for the national parliament and local offices. Far be it from me from telling people how to run their countries, but let us not be shy, either, about saying that freedom and democracy are better than any known alternatives.

The Algerian Constitution of 1989 allows for multi-party democracy; private NGOs and government agencies of the U.S. should politely but firmly insist that the Algerians respect their own laws. This message is by no means only for the Algerian government. You must bear in mind that one of the reasons for the present situation is the Islamists' quite unabashed contempt for democratic processes. There was a legitimate fear that they were riding on democracy to kill democracy in 1991. As long as we are going to take a missionary attitude, we might as well apply it indiscriminately.

This means, however, that we must give ourselves the means to preach. Since 1992 or 3, I believe, Freedom House, in cooperation with Algerian democrats, has sought support from private and public sources, in America and Europe, for a program to help maintain democratic education and the free flow of information in Algeria. I am truly sorry to report that we have been utterly unsuccessful. As a democracy-and-liberty activist, I am ashamed of those pro-democracy foundations and agencies, whether in the U.S. or the EU, that cannot find a few dollars to support people who are quite literally dying for freedom. As a journalist, I am appalled that the powerful and rich U.S. media organisations cannot spare some loose change to help colleagues who are being killed at a rate which I think has never been seen in the annals of journalism.

We still have time to make up for this shameful neglect, to the degree at least that making up is always better than doing nothing.

One more thing. The Algerian constitution of 1989 maintains Islam as the state religion. Now there are many Algerians who believe that an open society requires that you separate church and state, or in this case, mosque and state. Again, without any false scruples about telling people how to run their country, I think we can, private organisations and public agencies, politely inform the Algerians that if they are to fulfill their great promise as the land of Islam that is also a land of liberty, they must take this step. It is not unprecedented, as the Turkish and Tunisian cases show.

Roger Kaplan is editor of *Freedom Review* and director of publications at Freedom House. *Freedom Review* is a bi-monthly journal of politics, culture, human rights, and international affairs, published by Freedom House and Transaction Press of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Headquartered in New York City, Freedom House, founded in 1941 by Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie, is a nonpartisan, human rights organization dedicated to promoting and strengthening democratic institutions around the world.



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